Campus Alberta Quality Council

Fifth Annual Report

1 April 2008 • 31 March 2009

Campus Alberta Quality Council

11th Floor, Commerce Place
10155 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5

(780) 427-8921 phone
(780) 427-0423 fax

caqc@gov.ab.ca
www.caqc.gov.ab.ca

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Letter to the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology

Campus Alberta Quality Council

11th Floor, Commerce Place
10155 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4L5
780-427-8921
fax 780-427-0423
www.caqc.gov.ab.ca

30 June 2009

Honourable Doug Horner
Minister of Advanced Education and Technology
324 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Dear Mr. Horner:

RE: Campus Alberta Quality Council Fifth Annual Report

On behalf of the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC), I have the honour of providing you with the Fifth Annual Report for the period 1 April 2008 through 31 March 2009.

CAQC had an eventful and rewarding year in 2008-09, highlighted by developments that will have a significant impact on the long-term future of post-secondary education in Alberta. It was a very active year as several institutions – university and college level, public and private, resident and non-resident – brought forward proposals for new degree programs. On the whole, we were impressed both with the quality of the programs proposed to us and the variety of new educational opportunities they offer to learners in Alberta.

On Council's recommendation, you subsequently approved seventeen degree programs including nine undergraduate and eight graduate programs to be offered by Alberta universities as well as public and private university colleges. Furthermore, eleven program proposals were undergoing Council's review as of the end of the reporting period.

In addition to assessing the quality of new program proposals, Council was active in developing and refining its policies and procedures. To that end, Council adopted an Action Plan to address various matters arising from the three-year review of its activities and to increase the efficiency of its work. As degree programs offered by non-resident institutions must align with quality expectations in Alberta, Council gave increased attention to developing new review processes for these programs during the reporting year. As well, it developed and posted on its web site the *CAQC Handbook*, which consolidates into one coherent document all necessary information for applicants seeking to offer new degrees, as well as information on Council's monitoring activities.

The volume of work that the Secretariat and Council have managed continued to be significant during the reporting period. I would like to express gratitude on behalf of Council for the excellent work done by the Secretariat staff under the leadership of Marilyn Patton. Their hard work, thorough research, sound judgment and commitment to quality has greatly assisted Council, and helped to strengthen Alberta's leadership in educational quality assurance.

It has been a busy and successful year. We look forward to the year ahead, and to new challenges we will surely face, as we work with you to promote high standards for degree programs and to protect the interests of learners in Alberta.

Sincerely,

Ronald B. Bond, PhD
Chair

CAQC Mandate

The Campus Alberta Quality Council is an arms-length quality assurance agency that makes recommendations to the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology on applications from post-secondary institutions seeking to offer new degree programs in Alberta under the terms of the *Post-secondary Learning Act, 2003* and the Approval of Programs of Study Regulation (51/2004).

Other than degrees in divinity, all new degree programs to be offered in Alberta must be approved by the government. Therefore, Council is charged with the quality review and monitoring of all degree programs proposed by:

- resident public institutions
- resident private institutions, both for-profit and non-profit
- non-resident (out-of-province) public institutions and both for-profit and non-profit private institutions

Activities of Council

Council safeguards the public interest in the quality of approved degrees, and also encourages institutions that offer approved degree programs in Alberta to continue improving the management of quality of their degree programs. During the reporting year, Council held five two-day meetings and focused on the following areas of activity:

- conducting program, organizational and comprehensive evaluations
- making recommendations to the Minister on applications from post-secondary institutions seeking to offer new degree programs
- responding to the Minister with respect to the policy direction to be taken on three-year (90 credit) degrees in Alberta
- establishing and refining Council's procedures and assessment practices with respect to resident institutions
- developing criteria for assessing collaborative degrees that were not reviewed as part of the original program proposal submission
- developing processes for assessment and approval of degree programs offered by grandfathered non-resident institutions to align them with current quality expectations in Alberta
- monitoring approved degree programs offered by resident and non-resident institutions to ensure their compliance with Council's conditions and quality standards
- offering advice to institutions on academic standards and quality
- communicating the role of Council to stakeholders within the province and to relevant national bodies as well as with other provincial quality assurance agencies
- finalizing an Action Plan to address issues arising from the review of Council's work in the previous year

Keeping with its desire to meet with representatives of the applicant institutions, Council has continued to hold its meetings at various institutions across the province. In 2008-2009, Council met at Lethbridge College, Concordia University College of Alberta and Ambrose University College. During the meetings, the host institution had an opportunity to make a presentation to Council members on their current programs and future plans.

Establishing and Refining Procedures and Assessment Standards and Guidelines

During the reporting year, Council developed and posted on its web site the *CAQC Handbook,* designed primarily to provide guidance to post-secondary institutions as they seek to understand CAQC's standards, policies and procedures. As well, to facilitate Council's work, the CAQC Secretariat has developed and maintained a new SharePoint site for members.

CAQC continues to establish assessment materials appropriate to its roles. In 2008-2009, Council adopted or endorsed the following documents (a short description of these materials is available in Appendix 2):

- Collaborative Degree Protocol
- Expedited Review Process Description: Non-Resident Institutions
- New annual reporting templates including Table 1: Teaching Staff by Approved Degree Program / Major and Table 2: Scholarly Activity by Approved Degree Program / Major
- Toolkit for Off-site and Cross-border Delivery of Programs

As well, Council revised the following documents:

- CAQC Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees (to include guidelines for Business, Music, and Applied Degree programs as well as a Glossary)
- Expedited Review Process Description – Resident Institutions
- Graduate Program Proposal Guidelines and Assessment Standards
- Key Operating Principles (to include a new principle regarding the student focus of Council's activities)
- Monitoring of Approved Degree Programs
- Statement of Institutional Integrity

Action Plan

Based on the results of an independent contractor's report of CAQC's three-year review conducted in 2007-2008, Council adopted an Action Plan in July 2008 to define strategies to build on its areas of strength and best practices, as well as to introduce improvements in the areas identified in the report and in Council's discussions of it. The plan's action items were incorporated into the Council's 2008-2011 management plan.

Subcommittees

Council has one standing committee, and during the reporting period continued two ad-hoc committees to facilitate its work.

Proposal Review Standing Committee

In keeping with its commitment to act expeditiously, Council's Proposal Review Standing Committee (PRSC) acts on behalf of the full Council in reviewing requests for expedited reviews and conducting desk reviews of proposals undergoing fully expedited reviews. In addition, the committee reviews substantive changes in approved degree programs. In 2008-2009, PRSC reviewed 23 requests for fully or partially expedited reviews. It conducted 13 desk reviews of program proposals and recommended their approval to the Minister. The Committee has also reviewed two program name change requests and three proposals for the addition of new program options to approved programs. As well, PRSC acted as a sounding board for substantive changes in CAQC documents and participated in the review of the Alberta Universities Association pilot project.

Nomenclature and Degree Programs Subcommittee

During the reporting year, the Nomenclature and Degree Programs Subcommittee held two meetings. This Subcommittee consists of four Council members and representatives from three stakeholder groups: the Alberta Universities Association (AUA), the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes (AACTI), and the Private Accredited Post-secondary Institutions Council (PAPIC). During the reporting period, the Subcommittee produced a glossary and finalized guidelines for baccalaureate degrees in Business, Music, and Applied Degrees, and continues to work on guidelines for Degrees Involving Diplomas (2+2 programs) and Nursing degree programs. Once approved by Council, these standards and guidelines were (or will be) incorporated in the document *CAQC's Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees* and posted in Council's *Handbook* on its web site.

Working Group on Quality Assurance of Off-campus and International Degree Programs

The Working Group on Quality Assurance of Off-campus and International Degree Programs was established to develop tools that institutions might find helpful when they are considering offering programs off-campus on their own or in partnership with another institution, particularly if that institution were in another country. Membership on the Working Group included the Deputy Provost of the University of Calgary, the Vice-Provost of the University of Alberta, the Ministry's Director of International Education (or alternate), CAQC's Chair, and the Director of the CAQC Secretariat.

At its last meeting on 28 January 2009, the Working Group finalized a toolkit of resources including principles, a checklist and an annotated bibliography. Following Council's endorsement, the document was disseminated to stakeholders and posted on Council's web site in March 2009. The toolkit is expected to be discussed and evaluated after one year.

Stakeholder Engagement

Promoting openness and transparency in all its practices, Council works with stakeholders as it develops policies and guidelines to assess and enhance the quality of degree programs. For example, during the reporting year AUA, AACTI, and PAPIC vetted Business, Music, and Applied Degree guidelines before they were adopted by Council and added to *CAQC Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees*. CAQC has continued working with AUA and the Ministry on the Template and Review Process Pilot Project regarding the format and content of program proposals from universities as well as on the development of monitoring mechanisms for approved programs that are not required to undergo a comprehensive evaluation.

Council's Chair, the Director and the Manager of the CAQC Secretariat communicated regularly with institutions and other stakeholders to explain Council's principles and procedures and to seek input on the best ways to serve the interests of the post-secondary system and its learners.

In 2008-2009, meetings were held with the Honourable Doug Horner, Minister of Advanced Education and Technology, and his Executive Assistant Tim Schultz, Deputy Minister Annette Trimbee, and Assistant Deputy Minister Connie Harrison. Meetings also took place with other officials from the Ministry to:

- ensure that the department's system coordination reviews and Council's quality assessment reviews are coordinated as much as possible
- ensure that information requirements with respect to program proposals are harmonized
- ensure that annual reporting by public and private institutions to the department and Council is coordinated
- develop new approval and monitoring processes for programs offered by non-resident institutions.

As well, Council continued to enhance collaboration with the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT) to benefit Alberta learners. To this end, the Chair of ACAT, Mr. Ron Woodward, met with the full Council at its September 2008 meeting to outline ACAT initiatives. CAQC's Chair and the Secretariat's Director participated in ACAT's February 2009 meeting to inform members of CAQC activities. In both meetings participants explored ways the two Councils could work together. Currently, through its Secretariat, Council is helping ACAT with its project to identify

best practices with respect to learner progression opportunities and practices among Alberta's post-secondary institutions.

During the reporting year, Council's Chair and members of the Secretariat met with officials from post-secondary institutions (resident and non-resident) to discuss current Council initiatives and to provide a clearer understanding of degree approval and quality assessment processes.

Meetings (in person or by phone) also took place with representatives of the following:

Alberta Universities Association
Nursing Education Program Approval Board
Association of Alberta Deans of Education
Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations
Council of Ontario Universities
Ontario's Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Colleges Ontario
Ontario Council on Graduate Studies
BC's Degree Quality Assessment Board Secretariat
Saskatchewan's Universities and Adult Learning Branch
Ontario's Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board Secretariat
Office for Education Development, University of Bergen, Norway

Conferences and Presentations

As it is important that Council's assessments be recognized and understood both within and outside the province, Council's Chair, Secretariat Director, and Manager attended meetings and conferences and, in several cases, made presentations relating to the work of Council. These included:

Event	*Location*	*Attendee(s)*
Canadian Perspectives on the Bologna Process Conference, University of Alberta	*Edmonton, AB*	*Marilyn Patton and Guy Germain*
Pan-Canadian Quality Assurance Symposium: Challenges and Opportunities in Canadian Degree Quality Assurance	*Quebec City, QC*	*Ronald Bond, Marilyn Patton and Guy Germain*
Quality Network for Universities (QNU) meeting	*Toronto, ON*	*Ronald Bond and Marilyn Patton*
Student Orientation Training	*Edmonton*	*Ronald Bond*
University of Alberta symposium on partnerships	*Edmonton, AB*	*Ronald Bond and Marilyn Patton*

National and International Initiatives

To promote the national and international recognition of Alberta degrees in the absence of national accreditation in Canada, it is vital that provincial representatives communicate regularly. The development of connections through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and among provincial quality assurance agencies has thus been a priority.

Council's Secretariat is involved in an important national initiative – the CMEC Quality Assurance Subcommittee, which continues its work under the chairmanship of Marilyn Patton, Director of Council's Secretariat. The Subcommittee's work at the pan-Canadian level not only improves the understanding of degrees granted by Alberta institutions and how they are assessed, but also facilitates interprovincial student mobility. On 26-28 May 2008, the Subcommittee, with support of CMEC, organized a Pan-Canadian Quality Assurance Symposium in Quebec City. This invitation-only event attracted almost 100 representatives of various government bodies and stakeholder groups from across the country and provided a forum to explore the challenges and opportunities facing quality assurance. Another important initiative of the Subcommittee is to develop discussion papers on various topics relating to degree quality in Canada, as mandated by CMEC's Postsecondary Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee.

During the reporting year, Council and the Secretariat continued working with British Columbia's Degree Quality Assessment Board and its Secretariat on mutual recognition of quality assessments of degree programs in both provinces.

Evaluations and Recommendations

Council is an integral component of the program approval process in Alberta. When an institution submits an application to the Minister to offer a new program, the proposal first undergoes a system coordination review by ministry staff to determine whether there is a need for the program and how it fits with other programs offered within the provincial post-secondary system. If the outcome of the system coordination review is positive, the Minister may refer the proposal to CAQC for a quality review and a recommendation on whether to approve the proposed program. After receiving Council's recommendation, the Minister makes a decision on whether to approve the program. Funding of the program is a separate consideration, which does not involve Council.

The process of approval for new degree programs being proposed is as follows:

Application to the Minister

↓

System coordination review by AET

↓

Referral to Council for organizational review (if necessary) and program quality review

↓

Council's recommendation to the Minister

↓

Minister's Decision

Council's evaluation process is rigorous, depends heavily on peer-review, and takes into consideration the experience of an institution in offering degree programming. When an institution proposes its first degree program, a first degree program at a new level, or other precedent-setting degree, it will normally be subject to a full assessment by Council, including both an organizational and a program review.

For institutions that have experience in offering degree programs at the level of the degree being proposed, a fully expedited review (no organizational evaluation and a desk review by Council's PRSC and Secretariat rather than engaging external evaluators for the program review) or partially expedited review (one not requiring an organizational evaluation) may be possible. Council's criteria for granting expedited reviews are published on its web site.

Council is committed to having review processes that are iterative and recursive. It works closely with institutions during the review process and after a program's approval to foster continuous development and improvement of degree programs.

Applications Referred to Council and Council Recommendations

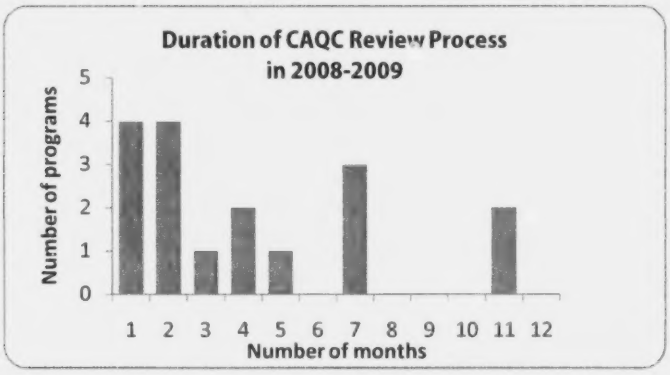
Of the 17 programs approved by the Minister on Council's recommendation during the reporting year, nine were baccalaureate programs and eight were graduate programs. Thirteen programs have undergone fully expedited review by PRSC acting on behalf of Council while the remaining four were subject to a partially expedited review using CAQC-appointed external evaluation teams. On 31 March 2009, Council had 11 program referrals that were at various stages of review (for details please see the table below).

Of the 11 proposals that are currently under CAQC's consideration three were submitted by non-resident institutions, and Council expects to receive more applications from out-of-province institutions in the near future. The increased activity in this area stems from the requirement that all non-resident institutions currently offering (or planning to offer) degree programs in Alberta must align with quality expectations for resident institutions in our jurisdiction.

The time required for Council to make a recommendation is affected by various factors such as the completeness of the institution's final proposal, whether or not an organizational evaluation is

required before the program review, the time it takes to recruit external reviewers and establish a site visit date mutually agreeable to all reviewers and the institution, and whether or not the institution is asked to provide further refinements of the proposal before a recommendation can be made to the Minister.

The period of time between Council's receipt of an institution's full program proposal and Council's recommendation to the Minister ranged from one to eleven months, with 88% of the proposals reviewed within seven months. Only two proposals out of seventeen took longer than seven months for Council to make a recommendation. This is an improvement when compared with the duration of Council's review process in 2007-2008 when it ranged from one to 17 months.



The following table outlines the proposals referred to Council by the Minister and/or the degree programs approved by the Minister on recommendation of Council between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009.

Alberta Public Institutions Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date
Athabasca University				
Doctor of Business Administration	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*3 July 2008*
Mount Royal College				
4-year Bachelor of Computer Information Systems	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*7 July 2008*
4-year Bachelor of Education (Elementary)	*Program*	*Under Review*		
5-year Bachelor of Education (Elementary) / Bachelor of Arts combined degree	*Program*	*Under Review*		
5-year Bachelor of Education (Elementary) / Bachelor of Science combined degree	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)				
4-year Bachelor of Business Administration (Accounting)	*Organizational & Program*	*Under Review*		
4-year Bachelor of Science in Internetworking	*Program*	*Under Review*		
University of Alberta				
4-year Bachelor of Science in Animal Health (Companion and Performance Animals)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*8 Jan 2009*
4-year Bachelor of Science in Animal Health (Food Animals)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*8 Jan 2009*
4-year Bachelor of Science in Animal Health (Food Safety and Quality)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*8 Jan 2009*
Master of Science in Integrated Petroleum Geosciences	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*2 Feb 2009*
5-year Bachelor of Arts (Drama) / Bachelor of Education (Secondary) combined degree	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*18 Feb 2009*
4-year Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (Horticulture)	*Program*	*Proposal Withdrawn*		

Alberta Public Institutions (Continued) Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date
University of Calgary				
4-year Bachelor of Film Studies	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*24 April 2008*
4-year Bachelor of Science (Neuroscience)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*20 May 2008*
Master of Science (Immunology)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*20 June 2008*
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Immunology	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*20 June 2008*
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Military and Strategic Studies	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*12 Nov 2008*
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Greek and Roman Studies	*Program**	*Under Review*		
University of Lethbridge				
Master of Fine Arts (Art, Theatre and Dramatic Arts, New Media)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*19 Nov 2008*
Master of Music	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*27 Nov 2008*

Alberta Private Institutions Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date
Ambrose University College				
4-year Bachelor of Business Administration	*Program*	*Under Review*		
2-year Bachelor of Education (After Degree) Elementary Education	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Canadian University College				
4-year Bachelor of Music (Performance)	*Program**	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*24 June 2008*
Concordia University College of Alberta				
Master of Arts in Biblical and Christian Studies	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*7 July 2008*
St. Mary's University College				
2-year Bachelor of Education (After Degree) in Elementary Education	*Program*	*To Approve*	*Approved*	*20 May 2008*

Non-Resident (Out-of-Province) Private Institutions Program	Type of Review	CAQC Recommendation	Minister's Decision	Date
Gonzaga University				
Master of Counselling	*Program*	*Under Review*		
Master of Arts in Leadership and Administration	*Program*	*Under Review*		
City University of Seattle				
Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology	*Program*	*Under Review*		

* Fully Expedited Review

Evaluation Teams

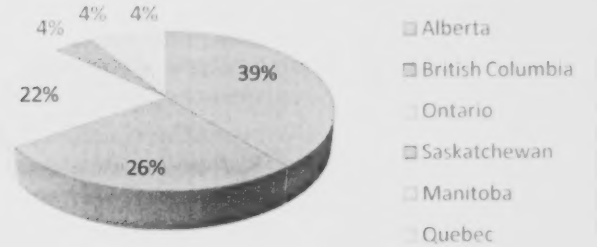
As noted in Council's fourth operating principle, peer evaluations form the basis of Council's assessment of the applicant's ability to implement and sustain degree programs and the quality of the proposed program. Recruitment of appropriate external experts to assist with Council's evaluations is important as the quality of the reviewers affects the quality of the review, which in turn affects the quality of the program under review. Council ensures that the external reviewers' perspectives brought to the evaluation process are a judicious mix of relevant technical expertise and a detached external stakeholder point of view. Depending on the circumstance, Council employs three types of teams of experts in evaluating proposed programs and monitoring approved degree programs:

- *Organizational evaluation teams* assist Council in examining the extent to which the systems and processes of the institution are clearly established to achieve excellence in learning at the degree level.
- *Program evaluation teams* help ensure that degree programs offered by institutions are of an acceptably high quality, and comparable in quality to other degree programs in Alberta and Canada.
- *Comprehensive evaluation teams* help fulfill Council's role with respect to periodic evaluations of institutions offering approved degree programs.

The recruitment and preparation of teams is managed by the Secretariat. Prior to their site visits, teams have an orientation meeting with the Chair (or alternate) and are provided with a comprehensive binder outlining their roles and responsibilities, the assessment standards to be used and detailed information about the proposed program and/or the institution. The Director or Manager of the Secretariat coordinates each review and acts as an advisor to the team during the site visit. Once the review is completed, team members and the institution are asked to provide feedback about their experience and offer suggestions for improving the review process. At its September 2008 annual retreat, Council members reviewed the feedback provided by the evaluation teams as well as the institutions. The feedback indicates a very high level of satisfaction with the work of Council and its Secretariat.

Evaluators are typically senior academics and administrators from universities or other institutions offering approved degree programs in Alberta or elsewhere in Canada. In 2008-2009, Council's program evaluation teams included 23 experts (nine from Alberta and 14 from other Canadian provinces).

CAQC External Reviewers by Province, 2008-2009



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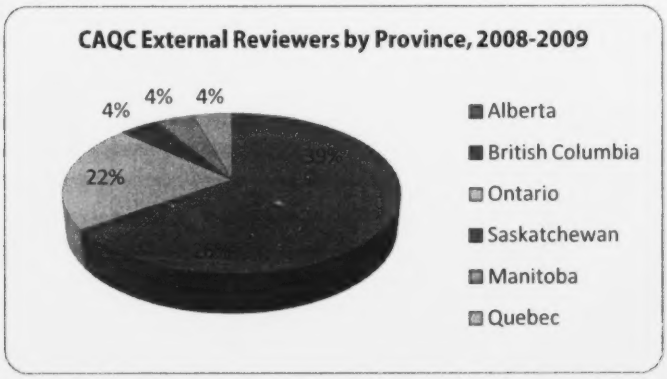


Council wishes to acknowledge the commitment of the following reviewers who provided evaluation services during the reporting year:

Dr. Ellen Aitken	*McGill University*	*Dr. Margaret McNay*	*University of Western Ontario*
Dr. Bill Connor	*University of Alberta*	*Dr. Dianne Oberg*	*University of Alberta*
Dr. Mark Evered	*Thompson Rivers University*	*Dr. Alyce Oosterhuis*	*The King's University College*
Dr. Volker Greifenhagen	*University of Regina*	*Dr. Peter Richardson*	*University of Toronto*
Dr. Andrew Hay	*Okanagan College*	*Dr. Sharon Robertson*	*University of Calgary*
Dr. Bryan Hiebert	*University of Calgary*	*Dr. Katherine Sanford*	*University of Victoria*
Dr. Judith Hughes	*Athabasca University*	*Dr. David Smith*	*University of Ottawa*
Dr. Gerald Killan	*University of Western Ontario*	*(2 reviews)*	
Dr. David Kirby	*University of Manitoba*	*Dr. Harro Van Brummelen*	*Trinity Western University*
Dr. Annette LaGrange	*University of Calgary*	*Dr. John Waterhouse*	*Simon Fraser University*
Dr. E. Anne Marshall	*University of Victoria*	*Dr. Ian Winchester*	*University of Calgary*
Dr. Linda McDonald	*University of Alberta*	*Dr. LeRoy Whitehead*	*Queen's University*

External experts engaged by Council adhere to the Campus Alberta Quality Council Code of Conduct, which ensures that they avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest including that which may impair or impugn the integrity, impartiality or independence of Council. The final decisions on all matters relating to an evaluation team rest with Council, including the team's membership and its terms of reference.

Monitoring and Periodic Review

The *Approval of Programs of Study Regulation* outlines Council's responsibilities with respect to the monitoring of approved new degrees. Should it determine that the institution no longer meets the required organizational conditions or that the approved program no longer meets required standards of quality, Council may recommend that approval be discontinued.

Monitoring may take various forms including annual reporting, periodic reporting, comprehensive evaluations, as well as subsequent evaluations. It may also ask for reporting prior to, or immediately after, implementation of a new program.

Annual Reporting

During 2008-2009, Council developed new monitoring templates to be used by some public and private institutions to submit their annual updates on faculty and scholarly activity in approved degree programs. With the exception of Alberta universities, all institutions (including non-resident institutions) are required to submit their annual reporting by 1 November each year to enable Council to review them at its December meeting and to provide timely feedback regarding approved degree programs.

Comprehensive Evaluation

In addition to annual reporting, Council also conducts periodic reviews. Normally Council conducts at least one comprehensive evaluation (a combined organizational and program(s) evaluation) of an institution offering approved degree programs in Alberta after five years from the time of initial degree granting approval. A subsequent comprehensive evaluation may be conducted. During the reporting year, a first comprehensive evaluation was initiated with respect to Ambrose University College and the approved degrees it has been offering since 2000.

During 2008-2009, Council continued its first comprehensive evaluation of Taylor University College. However, the review was discontinued due to the institution's decision to wind down its operation as a degree-granting institution as of June 2009.

Council expects to conduct comprehensive evaluations according to the following schedule:

Institution	*Academic Year*
St. Mary's University College	*2009-2010*
Grant MacEwan College	*2011-2012*
Mount Royal College	*2012-2013*
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	*2012-2013*

Membership of Council

Council consists of eleven members appointed by the Minister, including a chair and 10 members representing expertise in the post-secondary system (brief biographical information about the members is available in Appendix 3). Services of a Secretariat are provided to Council by the Minister.

During the reporting year, Dr. Patricia Clements, Dr. Greg Moran and Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Patterson were appointed to Council for a three-year term to replace three members who completed their term. Those who completed their terms include Council's founding members Dr. Garry McKinnon, Dr. Doug Owram and Ms. Lucille Walter. Council extends its gratitude to these individuals for their exceptional contributions to its work.

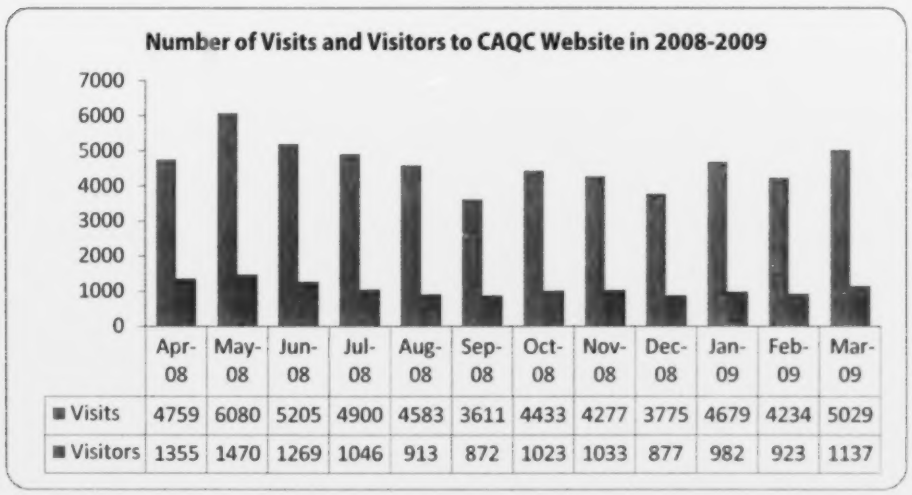
The following 14 individuals served on Council in 2008-2009:

Chair	*Ronald Bond*	
Members	*Keith Ward (Vice Chair)*	*Leo Mos*
	Patricia Clements	*Doug Owram (until 30 June 2008)*
	Dianne Kieren	*Margaret Patterson*
	Robert Lockwood	*Cliff Soper*
	Garry McKinnon (until 1 July 2008)	*Lucille Walter (until 28 August 2008)*
	Peter Meekison	*Mo Watanabe*
	Greg Moran	

CAQC's Web Site

CAQC's web site is an important tool to enhance Council's communication with its stakeholders and members of the public. The web site (www.caqc.gov.ab.ca) includes information about Council, the application process for new degree proposals, its assessment standards, relevant publications, its recommendations and applications under review, as well as links to relevant legislation and related organizations. To increase accessibility of its information to stakeholders, Council's web site was reorganized in 2008-2009. All main documents regarding the evaluation process as well as monitoring activities were consolidated into the *CAQC Handbook*, which is available in an electronic format.

As shown below, activity on the web site was brisk during 2008-2009. The number of visits increased by 20% in comparison with the previous reporting period.



	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09
■ Visits	4759	6080	5205	4900	4583	3611	4433	4277	3775	4679	4234	5029
■ Visitors	1355	1470	1269	1046	913	872	1023	1033	877	982	923	1137

CAQC Secretariat

The CAQC Secretariat assists the Chair and Council in their activities by providing advice on matters of policy and procedure, organizing meetings, helping to set meeting agendas, and preparing publications. It also provides information and advice in response to inquiries from various agencies, current and prospective applicants, and members of the public about matters related to quality assurance of new degree programs. As well, it coordinates all aspects with respect to Council's external evaluation teams and the Secretariat's Director or Manager serves as an advisory member on the teams.

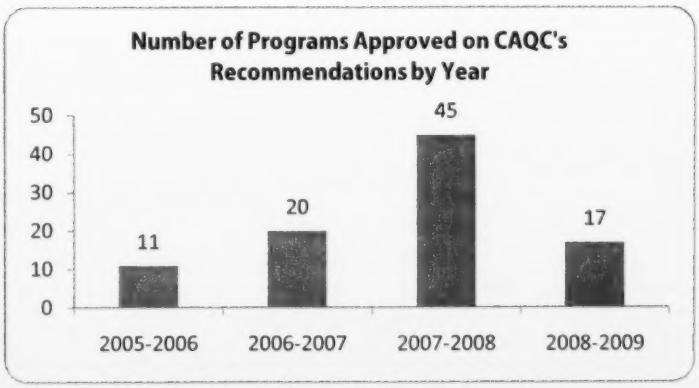
As of 31 March 2009, the Secretariat consists of:

Director	*Marilyn Patton*
Manager	*Guy Germain*
Research Officer	*Alex Makar*
Research & Policy Intern	*Cora Falacinski*
Research & Policy Intern	*Lindsay Manz*
Office Manager	*Shirley Miskowicz-Thomson*
Administrative Assistant Intern	*Ruth Eleyi:mi*

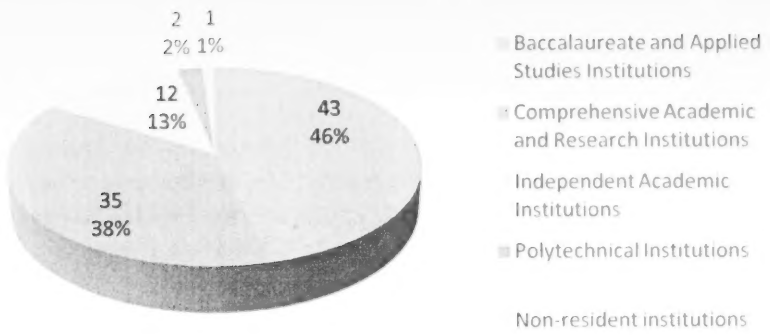
A Glance Back

Since its creation in 2004, Council has contributed significant value-added services to the post-secondary system in Alberta by ensuring that newly approved degree programs provide quality education opportunities to learners. In the process of carrying out its responsibilities, which include the recruitment of expert peer reviewers from both within Alberta and from other Canadian jurisdictions, Council has acquired extensive experience in evaluating both baccalaureate and graduate degree program proposals submitted by institutions from four out of the six sectors within the provincial post-secondary education system.

Since 2004, Council has reviewed and recommended approval of 93 degree programs including 75 baccalaureate and 18 graduate programs. Of these 93 programs, 45 were proposed by public colleges and technical institutes, 35 by Alberta universities, 12 by resident private university colleges and one by a non-resident institution.



Distribution of Programs Reviewed by CAQC by Institution Category, 2005-2009



As an advisory body to the Minister, Council strives to provide judicious recommendations with respect to quality implications of new government post-secondary initiatives including, for example, the *Roles and Mandates Policy Framework for Alberta's Publicly Funded Advanced Education System* and the future direction for three-year (90-credit) degrees in our province.

Next Steps

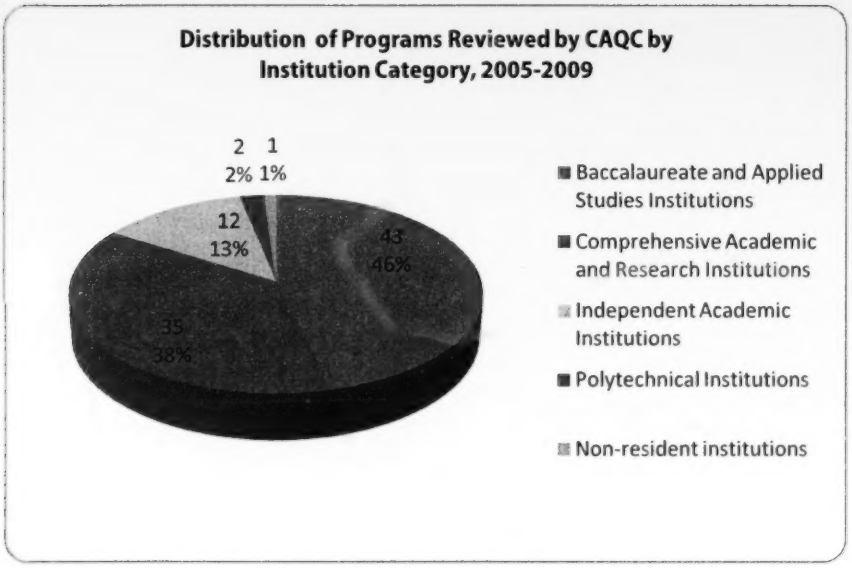
In the coming year, Council will continue to focus on improving the efficiency of its operations. To this end, it plans to review its operating principles, and will continue to implement an Action Plan developed in 2008-2009 as an outcome of its three-year review. Further, it will continue to gather feedback from reviewers and applicant institutions following each site visit and to consult stakeholders on the development and refinement of its policies and quality standards.

Council expects to review additional new degree guidelines developed by its Nomenclature and Degree Programs Subcommittee. To provide institutions with up-to-date information on quality assurance processes, Council's web site and *Handbook* will continue to be updated on a regular basis.

Council expects to finalize reviews of the 11 proposals under its consideration as of the end of the reporting year, as well as deal with any new referrals. In the year ahead, Council expects to receive more program proposals from non-resident institutions, both from the grandfathered institutions that must align with current quality expectations in Alberta and from other institutions. The trend in post-secondary education across Canada and internationally indicates that we can expect an increase in the activity of non-resident institutions in our province over the coming years.

With the growing number of programs approved on CAQC's recommendations, Council will give increased attention to refining its expectations and processes with respect to the monitoring of degree programs approved on its recommendation. For example, in the new reporting year, Council expects to review its experience with comprehensive evaluations. As Council anticipates fewer degree granting institutions applying to offer a precedent setting program, it expects to be less involved in organizational evaluations.

Council will continue working on enhancing the quality of degree programs in Alberta and on the recognition of its assessments, both nationally and internationally. Given that Canada does not have a national accreditation body for post-secondary institutions, the task of developing interprovincial initiatives on coordinating quality assurance processes is both challenging and vital. To that end, Council will maintain relationships with its provincial and regional counterparts and with pan-Canadian quality assurance initiatives as it expresses its ongoing commitment to post-secondary education in Alberta and to the students who are the beneficiaries of this commitment. Council will continue



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monitoring the best quality assurance practices in other jurisdictions with the purpose of identifying those practices that may benefit Alberta learners.

As Alberta's post-secondary institutions become more involved in globalization, the international dimension of quality assurance will become very important to Council. During the past decade, the issue of quality assurance became a focal point in redefining post-secondary systems in many countries and regions of the world. Especially noteworthy in this respect is the Bologna process through which virtually all European countries have committed to harmonizing their post-secondary education systems. These new international processes provide significant opportunities as well as challenges for Council's activities. The opportunities are related to new possibilities of aligning our practices with the best international practices. At the same time, the new international processes underscore differences among educational systems, for example, between Canada and the European countries involved in the Bologna process. These new developments may lead to Council's refinement of the Toolkit for Off-site and Cross-border Delivery of Programs (referred to earlier), especially as our stakeholders begin using it.

Council will continue working closely with ACAT to broaden collaborative initiatives between the two agencies that were started during the previous reporting period.

Council looks forward to commenting on and supporting any new Ministry initiatives with respect to quality assurance and expects to continue to develop a deep and comprehensive understanding of the various forms of quality assurance and quality improvement found within the post-secondary system and within the individual institutions of which it is composed. We remain committed as well to the sharing of best practices associated with quality assurance within Campus Alberta. We are eager to work with officials within the Ministry and the post-secondary institutions in the province to celebrate the strength of the system we have, while considering how that system can be made even stronger in the years ahead.

Appendix 1

Campus Alberta Quality Council Key Operating Principles

1. The Council **standards** are appropriate to the program level/scope and are comparable to national and international standards. Within this context, Council is open to flexibility and innovation in degree programming.
2. The **best interests of learners** are at the core of Council's activities as it assesses and monitors the quality of degree programs.

   Revised to add Principle 2, May 2008
3. The Council respects the foundational role of **academic freedom** in the provision of high quality post-secondary programs.
4. **Peer evaluation** is an essential component of the Council's evaluation of post-secondary degree programs.
5. **Stakeholder participation** is an integral part of the degree appraisal process.
6. The Council acts to develop and retain **autonomy** from influences that may undermine or otherwise affect trust in its functions and decisions.
7. The Council exhibits **equity** in all aspects of its operation. Equity encompasses the idea that applicants are treated fairly but not necessarily identically.
8. The Council exhibits and promotes **openness and transparency** in all its practices and policies. In its commitment to consistency of decision making, the Council aims to develop public trust that all eligible institutions meeting the Council's standards and practices will be able to apply and take part fully in the functioning of the Council under its mandate, administration and processes.
9. Processes established by the Council are considered **iterative** in nature. This means that the Council's decisions and judgments have the potential for continuous development and improvement of institutional degree programs.
10. Within the context of its iterative processes, the Council acts **expeditiously** and in keeping with principles of natural justice.
11. The Council is committed to the **quality assurance review** of its own activities and to the interprovincial sharing of best practices in post-secondary degree program quality assessment. Its processes are dynamic and continuously improving.
12. The Council exhibits and promotes **appreciation of institutional diversity** and respect for institutional autonomy and integrity among the institutions proposing degree programs.
13. The Council ensures that approved degree programs and Council decisions with respect to them are **monitored** and the extent of monitoring is appropriate to the experience of the institution.
14. Members and peer reviewers shall act in accordance with **ethical standards** and abide by Council's code of conduct which includes provisions on conflict of interest.

Appendix 2

Principal Documents and Publications of the Campus Alberta Quality Council

CAQC Handbook: Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance

The following documents are now included in the CAQC Handbook:

- *Academic Freedom and Scholarship Policy*

  Council's policy on academic freedom, including its statement on institutional integrity, scholarship/research/creative activity, and institutional policies on scholarly activity.

- *CAQC Expectations for Design and Structure of Undergraduate Degrees*

  To assist both the applicant institution in preparing new degree proposals, and CAQC's evaluators in assessing the quality of degree programs, this document provides specific expectations with respect to undergraduate degree programs.

- *Expedited Review Process Description*

  The Expedited Review Process Description includes two documents, *Expedited Review Process Description – Resident Institutions* and *Expedited Review Process Description – Non-Resident Institutions*, which outline Council's expedited review process including eligibility criteria for fully expedited review.

- *Standards on Academic Staff for Baccalaureate Programs*

  Council's standards with respect to academic staff teaching in undergraduate programs. The document was approved and adopted by Council at its May 2007 meeting.

- *Independent Academic Experts*

  Normally, Council requires institutions to include with the proposal the full report of academic expert(s) engaged by the institution as well as the institution's response. This document provides guidelines to institutions for their selection of independent academic experts.

- *Institutional Self-Study Guidelines*

  This document assists institutions in preparing for a self-study, which is required for Council's organizational and comprehensive evaluations.

- *Monitoring of Approved Degree Programs*

  This document outlines different kinds of periodic evaluation undertaken by Council in fulfillment of its monitoring role. In addition to this document, Council provides institutions with templates for their annual reporting regarding staffing and scholarly activity in the approved degree programs.

- *Policy on Release of Information*

  After an extensive consultation process with various stakeholders, Council published its Policy on Release of Information with respect to its review processes and decisions.

Documents and Publications not included in the CAQC Handbook

- *Collaborative Degree Protocol*

  To assist institutions in preparing submissions for new collaborative arrangements that were not assessed as part of the initial program proposal review, this document outlines specific expectations with respect to the information institutions must submit to Council.

- *Guide for Teams Conducting Comprehensive Evaluations*

  The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting comprehensive evaluations. The "CAQC Code of Conduct" is included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- *Guide for Teams Conducting Evaluations of Proposed Undergraduate Programs*

  The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and

responsibilities when evaluating proposed undergraduate programs. The "Framework for Program Evaluation" and "CAQC Code of Conduct" are included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- *Guide for Teams Conducting Organizational Evaluations (Resident Alberta Institutions)*

  The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting organizational evaluations of first-time applicants. The "Framework for Organizational Evaluation and Scorebook" is included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- *Guide for Teams Conducting Evaluations of Proposed Graduate Programs*

  The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting evaluations of graduate programs. The "CAQC Code of Conduct" is included. The guide is reviewed and updated as needed.

- *Guide for Teams Conducting Evaluations of Proposed Graduate Programs (Non-Resident Institutions)*

  The guide provides information for external evaluation teams with respect to their role and responsibilities when conducting evaluations of graduate programs proposed by non-resident institutions.

- *Hosting a Site Visit*

  This document offers guidance to institutions to assist them in preparing for a site visit by a Council-appointed external evaluation team.

- *Toolkit for Off-site and Cross-border Delivery of Programs*

  The toolkit provides resources for institutions planning to deliver programs off-site or internationally and includes principles, a checklist and an annotated bibliography.

Appendix 3

Campus Alberta Quality Council Member Information

(as of March 2009)

Dr. Ronald Bond (Chair) *Term: 13 July 2006 to 12 July 2009*

Dr. Bond is Emeritus Provost and Vice-President (Academic) at the University of Calgary and a former Professor of English and Dean of Humanities there.

Dr. Keith Ward (Vice Chair) *Term: 2 July 2006 to 1 July 2009*

Dr. Ward is Vice-President (Academic) Emeritus at The King's University College, a previous member of the Private Colleges Accreditation Board (PCAB) and a member of a number of other committees.

Dr. Patricia Clements *Term: 28 July 2008 to 27 July 2011*

Dr. Clements is Professor Emeritus of English and former Dean of Arts at the University of Alberta. She is a former President of the Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada, and has served on the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Dr. Dianne Kieren *Term: 2 July 2006 to 1 July 2009*

Dr. Kieren is a Professor Emeritus and former Associate Vice-President (Academic) at the University of Alberta and the outgoing Chair of the Private Colleges Accreditation Board (PCAB).

Dr. Robert Lockwood *Term: 24 July 2007 to 23 July 2010*

Dr. Lockwood has a long history of program development with Olds College where he has held several positions including eleven years as Vice President (Academic).

Dr. Peter Meekison *Term: 2 July 2007 to 1 July 2010*

Dr. Meekison is a University Professor Emeritus and former Vice-President (Academic) at the University of Alberta. He is the Acting Vice-President Academic and Provost/Governor at the Royal Roads University as well as an adjunct professor of Political Science at the University of Victoria.

Dr. Greg Moran *Term: 28 July 2008 to 27 July 2011*

Dr. Moran, former Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Western Ontario, is currently a professor of Psychology. He is a former Chair of the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents and a consultant to the Council of Ontario Universities and the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

Dr. Leo Mos *Term: 13 July 2006 to 12 July 2009*

Dr. Mos is a Professor of Psychology and Linguistics at the University of Alberta, has served as Chair of The King's University College Senate and is the former Director for the Centre for Advanced Study in Theoretical Psychology at the University of Alberta.

Dr. Margaret Patterson *Term: 2 September 2008 to 1 September 2011*

Dr. Patterson, former Chief Academic Officer and Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs) at the University of Calgary, is a professor of Higher Education Leadership, the founder and Director of the Canadian Centre for the Study of Higher Education, and is a former member of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Dr. Cliff Soper *Term: 2 July 2007 to 1 July 2010*

Dr. Soper is a retired chemistry instructor and administrator at Red Deer College. He has also served as Dean of Health and Science, acting Vice-President (Academic) and Director of the IKON Learning Innovation and Teaching Excellence Centre.

Dr. Mo Watanabe *Term: 2 July 2007 to 1 July 2010*

Dr. Watanabe is Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the University of Calgary, former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, and past Chair of several provincial and national health and research committees.

www.caqc.gov.ab.ca